

## Congressman Michaud Announces Major Funding for Maine Transportation Projects

Thursday, March 10 2005

Washington, DC - Today, Congressman Michael Michaud announced that H.R. 3, the federal highway and transit funding bill that passed the House of Representatives on Thursday by a vote of 417-9, will direct over \$1 billion to Maine in the next six years, including \$59.5 million that he secured for specific needs in Maine's Second Congressional District.

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Michaud is a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, the panel that authored the \$284 billion transportation reauthorization legislation to fund the nation's highway and transit needs through 2010. An earlier version of the bill was passed last year but stalled in negotiations between the Senate and the White House.

"This is an absolutely crucial economic package for Maine, because federal transportation funding already generates approximately 10,000 jobs in our state," said Michaud. "The added funding in this bill should help us add even more jobs as we work to improve our infrastructure and keep Maine's roadways safe."

Under the bill, Maine is estimated to receive \$1.078 billion in the next six years for highways alone. In the last six-year bill, Maine received around \$876 million-adding up to an increase this year of more than \$200 million. In addition, the total figures should climb, because this estimate does not yet include transit funding-a figure still being estimated by federal agencies. Under last year's version of the bill, Maine was slated to receive a 75% increase in transit funding for buses and rail, and this version is expected to yield a similarly strong increase.

The \$57.5 million in funding for High Priority Projects for Maine's Second Congressional District represents a substantial increase from the last time the transportation authorization bill was considered in 1998. At that time, the entire state of Maine received a total of \$45 million for such projects, representing the combined totals of all four members of Maine's Congressional delegation. Congressman Michaud also secured \$2 million outside of the High Priority Projects program for research at the Advanced Wood Composites Laboratory at the University of Maine.

The High Priority funding includes \$16 million dollars for the replacement of the Waldo-Hancock Bridge. The Waldo-Hancock Bridge has been the highest profile transportation project in Northern Maine in the past two years. This funding comes in addition to the \$5 million dollars that Michaud was able to garner in the last two years for the bridge working together with the rest of the Maine delegation, bringing the total federal funding he has helped secure to \$21 million.

"We have to replace the Waldo-Hancock Bridge as quickly as possible for the safety of travelers in the area and the sake of the economy of the region-the commerce of these counties depends on moving goods over the bridge" said Michaud.

Michaud was also able to secure \$8.5 million dollars for the new Calais/St. Stephen border crossing in the transportation bill, an increase of \$3.5 million since the House first passed this bill last year and more than half of the project's estimated total cost. The border crossing in Calais is now the 8th busiest commercial crossing to Canada in the United States. This funding should speed the construction schedule at the crossing, improve security and decrease congestion. The crossing will also be a gateway for improved East-West highway routes across Maine that should help the state increase commerce.

The bill will also include funding that Michaud acquired to improve transportation links in Aroostook County, which has frequently been neglected in transportation investment in the past. This includes \$4 million to plan and construct North-South Aroostook highways in order to improve access to the St. John Valley, and \$1 million to plan and construct better highway access between Route 161 in Daigle to US Route 1 in Madawaska.

Michaud also secured funding for business and economic development projects in Maine cities and towns. This includes \$2 million for the Penobscot Riverfront Development project for bicycle trails, amenities, and traffic circulation improvements in Bangor, \$5.8 million to construct the Lewiston/Auburn Downtown Connector, \$1.5 million for improvements to Route 108 to enhance access to the business park in Rumford, and \$400,000 for safety enhancements on Routes 11, 6, and 16 to support the Eastern Piscataquis Industrial Park in Dover-Foxcroft.

Michaud also made investment in trails a key component of Maine's project funding.

This includes \$1 million to construct a bicycle and pedestrian bridge over the Stillwater River in Orono, \$500,000 for improvements to the Interconnecting Trail System for bike and pedestrian trails in the Katahdin region, and \$4 million for general construction plus multi-use trail and snowmobile accommodations for the Route 116 Bridge in Medway.

Other projects in the Second District include \$4 million for the replacement of the Route 201-A "covered" bridge in Norridgewock, \$2.5 million for Route 2 Improvements from Bethel to Gilead, \$1.5 million for relocation of the southbound on-ramp to I-95 at exit 47 in Bangor to improve safety, and \$300,000 to purchase new buses to improve commuting to the Jackson Labs in Bar Harbor.

"This bi-partisan legislation is critically important to Maine's future and I am confident that we will have a bill on the President's desk in the near future," said Michaud.

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Please see attached document for a listing of projects funded in the Second District

Funding Specifically  
for Maine's Second Congressional District  
Included in the House Transportation Reauthorization Bill

Project

Funding

Replacement of Waldo-Hancock  
Bridge

\$16,000,000

Calais/St. Stephen Border Crossing

\$8,500,000

Plan and construct North-South Aroostook highways to  
improve access to St. John  
Valley

\$4,000,000

Construct bicycle and pedestrian bridge over Stillwater River, Orono

\$1,000,000

Construct and plan Lewiston/Auburn Downtown Connector

\$5,800,000

Construction and snowmobile accommodations for Route 116  
Bridge, Medway

\$4,000,000

Replacement of the Route 201-A "covered" bridge,  
Norridgewock

\$4,000,000

Plan and construct highway access between Route 161 in  
Daigle to US Route 1 in Madawaska

\$1,000,000

Penobscot Riverfront Development for bicycle trails,  
amenities, and traffic circulation improvements, Bangor

\$2,000,000

Improvements to the Interconnecting Trail System for  
bike/pedestrian trails near Baxter  
State Park

\$500,000

Route 2 Improvements from Bethel  
to Gilead

\$2,500,000

Improvements to Route 108 to enhance access to business  
park in Rumford

\$1,500,000

Relocation of southbound on-ramp to I-95 at exit 47, Bangor

\$1,500,000

Safety Enhancements on Routes 11, 6, and 16 for Piscataquis County Industrial Development

\$400,000

Improve portions of Route 116 between Lincoln and Medway  
to bring road up to modern standard.

\$3,500,000

Improve portions of Route 26 between Bethel

and Oxford

\$1,000,000

Purchase new buses to enhance commuting near the Jackson  
Labs

\$300,000

Language to support research at the Advanced Wood  
Composites Laboratory at the University  
of Maine for 2 years

\$2,000,000